

VZCZCXRO5893
OO RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHNR #2203/01 2941226
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 211226Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1356
INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUZEFAA/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE
RUZEFAA/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002203

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S CARSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/15/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#) [KE](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - TFG PRESIDENT ON RECRUITMENT IN KENYA
AND POLITICAL OUTREACH

REF: A. NAIROBI 1244

[B](#). NAIROBI 2169

[C](#). NAIROBI 2141

[D](#). NAIROBI 1795

Classified By: Ambassador Michael E. Ranneberger for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: TFG President Sheikh Sharif met with the Ambassador and Somalia Unit as he ended his travels to Saudia Arabia, the United States and Libya. President Sharif told us he recognized the need for a vigorous political strategy to complement his security forces' efforts to seize the initiative in Mogadishu and the regions. He repeated an oft-heard pledge to reach out especially to Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamma. We expressed concern about reports the TFG is recruiting refugees from northeast Kenya, as part of a larger TFG-Kenyan plan to challenge al-Shabaab in the Juba region. The President promised to investigate and end the practice if it is occurring. The media spotlight on the recruitment may sap Kenyan and TFG willingness to continue with the recruitment. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Ambassador and emboffs met with Transitional Federal Government (TFG) President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Foreign Minister Ali Jama Jangeli, Finance Minister Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden on October 16. Sharif and his delegation were returning from what he termed a "great opportunity" to meet U.S. officials and the Somali diaspora in Washington, New York, Minneapolis and Chicago.

[1](#)3. (C) Turning immediately to the security situation, Sharif said he sees this as a moment of opportunity and clarity. The Islamists are divided and feuding with each other. At the same time, it is clear the TFG security forces need leadership, training, equipment, facilities, including courts, and salaries to meet the challenges facing them. The President said he wanted to complement the security strategy with political outreach, including to anti-Shabaab Islamic group Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamma (ASWJ). The government would implement its June 2009 mutual support agreement with ASWJ, he said (reftel A).

[1](#)4. (C) The Ambassador told President Sheikh Sharif we were disturbed by reports young Somalis were being recruited from northeast Kenya, including from the Dadaab refugee camp, to join anti-Shabaab forces in Somalia's Juba region (reftels B, C). The Ambassador noted we were not supporting the Kenyan "Jubaland" initiative. Sharif said he was also concerned about recruitment in Kenya. Kenya-TFG planning for a Juba offensive had never envisioned recruiting Somali refugees and

migrants from Kenya. "No one should be recruited from the camps, and we will correct it if it happened," President Sharif said. Note: It is unlikely the TFG and Kenya will find large numbers of credible forces inside Lower Juba that are not already engaged in the fight for Kismayo. While Ogadeni clan leader and Hizbul Islam commander Ahmed Madobe's efforts to purge al-Shabaab from Kismayo may not be successful, we think a push to take Kismayo that does not include Madobe's Darod/Kabalah alliance would almost certainly fail and could spark intra-Darod conflict, likely to strengthen al-Shabaab. End Note.

15. (C) President Sharif stated that the original plan, which called for Kenya to train TFG-appointed liaison officers to help organize resistance to Shabaab in Juba, was still a good one. In order to right the effort, the President said he would transfer responsibility for the plan from Minister of Transport Mohamed Abdi "Gandi" to Minister of Defense Abdullah Boss Ahmed. President Sharif said that he was not fully confident that Madobe would join the government if he succeeded in pushing Shabaab from Juba. In any case, Madobe was showing himself to be a warlord bargaining for power, the president said.

16. (C) President Sharif said his political agenda included outreach to the regions and to the non-violent opposition. On this issue, he said he hoped to take up the Rwandan president's recent offer to host influential Somalis for discussions on how Rwanda had reconciled itself from the genocide. He also said he hoped to "reorganize" the government, but didn't indicate when. He pledged to continue

NAIROBI 00002203 002 OF 002

official visits to the semi-autonomous Puntland region, and to implement an agreement signed between the TFG and Puntland administration in September (ref D).

17. (C) Comment: We were struck by President Sharif's unequivocal pledge to honor the TFG's June agreement with ASWJ. The TFG's previous promises to support ASWJ have gone partially or wholly unfulfilled. ASWJ's influence in the regions continues to grow, and ASWJ leaders still ask us to persuade the TFG to cooperate with them. With regard to Juba, the media attention on recruitment around Dadaab could very well sap Kenya's willingness to continue hosting the reportedly large numbers of Somali refugees/migrants while they train for some now-undefined future action in Juba. Coupled with Sharif's expression of doubt about Ahmed Madobe's bona fides, it seems increasingly unlikely any TFG recruits would be sent to aid Madobe, who is the most significant challenger to al-Shabaab. End Comment.

RANNEBERGER